of quality and because such imports are cheaper at the coastal region. In addition, steel plants are importing coking coal to (i) bridge the gap between requirement and indigenous availability of coking coal of the required quality and (ii) to improve the quality of overall blend for technical reasons for improving performance of blast furnace.

Export of ALH

771. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India is exporting the indigenously developed Advanced Light Helicopter;

(b) if so, the countries where it is being exported; and

(c) the annual production of ALH by Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd.?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Preliminary discussions of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) with some potential customers have been held. However, no exports of the Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH), Dhruv, have yet taken place.

(c) During 2001-02, HAL produced seven ALH for Defence Forces and the Coast Guard. During 2002-03, HAL have planned production of eleven ALH for customers within India.

Construction of houses for Defence personnel

772. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry of Defence has proposed construction of dwelling units for Defence personnel;

(b) if so, whether such dwelling units would be for the benefit of ex-personnel of Defence also and on ownership basis;

(c) if so, whether any construction is proposed to take place in Tamil Nadu;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) to (e) Do not arise.

India's plan in weapons market

†773. SHRIMATI SAROJ DUBEY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India is making any effort for securing its own place in the vast weapons market of the world;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c)Yes, Sir. The Ordnance Factory Board and Defence Public Sector Undertakings have been exporting some of their products for several years after meeting domestic requirements. The steps taken to promote exports include - participation in international defence exhibitions, organising biennial international exhibitions namely DEFEXPO and AERO INDIA, distribution of Catalogues and CDs on Indian Defence Products through Indian Embassies, mobilizing involvement of India's Missions abroad in procuring orders for export and pursuing trade enquiries and interaction with foreign delegates/visitors.

Agreement with Russia for manufacture of high-tech defence equipments

774. SHRI CHO S. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that our country has signed an agreement with Russia recently for manufacture of high-tech defence equipments;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what will be the mode of payment for technology transfers; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.